

MATICES

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New Jersey Department of Community Affairs ☐ Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development

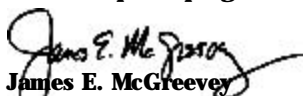
Greeting from Governor McGreevey & DCA Commissioner Levin

Welcome to the fall edition of *Matices*, the Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Center for Hispanic Policy, Research and Development (CHPRD) quarterly newsletter. This newsletter informs you about the events and issues affecting the Hispanic community and the resources available throughout the state.

Hispanics currently comprise about 13 percent of New Jersey's total population and are the fastest growing population in New Jersey. We recognize that the well being of the Latino community is critical to our state's future. That is why we recently worked with the Democratic Hispanic Caucus to restore more than \$2.1 million in state funding for Hispanic organizations and programs throughout New Jersey.

Through DCA, the Center works to empower New Jersey's Hispanic community through inclusion in policy development. We work to ensure that despite language and cultural barriers, Latinos have complete access to the services and programs they need. We facilitate professional and leadership development, emphasize the richness and diversity of the Latino culture and support programs through funding collaborations with private and public entities.

We are proud to produce this newsletter to keep you up-to-date on important issues affecting the community. We hope *Matices* is a valuable guide to New Jersey's resources and encourage you to learn more and become involved in our state's Hispanic programs.


James E. McGreevey
Governor


Susan Bass Levin
DCA Commissioner

Governor McGreevey Creates Hispanic Advisory Council for Policy Development

By Shelly Matos, CHPRD Intern

Governor James E. McGreevey signed an executive order creating the Governor's Hispanic Advisory Council for Policy Development (Hispanic Advisory Council). The purpose of the Council is to address the needs and concerns of the growing Hispanic community of New Jersey. According to the order, the Council is responsible for advising the governor on the legislative and policy needs of New Jersey's Hispanic community, including, but not limited to, health, education, economic development, housing and urban revitalization, and employment.

Following his commitment to better address the needs of the increasing Latino population of New Jersey, Governor McGreevey appointed members to the Hispanic Advisory Council that truly represent the Hispanic community of New Jersey. He appointed as chairwoman Ida Castro, commissioner of the New Jersey Department of Personnel (DOP).

"My role as chairwoman is to ensure that the Council's members focus on the requests and charges given by Governor McGreevey," Castro said in a *Matices* interview. "The Council is designed to explore the vital issues for the advancement of New Jersey's Latino population and recommend steps to ensure this community has access to services and programs that meet their needs."

According to Chairwoman Castro, the Latino community faces many challenges and quality of life issues, including the accessibility and affordability of quality healthcare, early childhood education and housing. She noted that these issues must be addressed. A substantial number of barriers also impede Latinos from accessing the benefits essential to maintaining a healthy quality of life. A large barrier is language.

The 2000 census reported that 25 percent of New Jersey's population speaks languages other than English. Moreover, 50 percent of the Hispanic population in New Jersey speaks English less than "very well." In communities that have a pre-

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Governor McGreevey, marching alongside Department of Personnel Commissioner Ida Castro, waves to the crowd during the Trenton Puerto Rican Parade.



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Greeting from CHPRD Director Angie Armand Leon

We are extraordinarily excited to bring you this latest edition of *Matices*. This edition is special to us because it covers topics that are important to our organization and the Latino community.

First and foremost, we are pleased that Governor McGreevey, Commissioner Levin and the Democratic

Latino Caucus worked so hard together to restore funding for our programs. Our community work is really paying off, and it was recognized by their efforts. Now we can continue to provide much needed services to our community and truly make a difference in people's lives.

I also am proud to share with you where some of our intern alumni are today. Because of their hard work - and some experience through DCA and the CHPRD - our interns are beginning to embark on their professional careers. They are taking what they learned here with them into the real world - into our communities - to make a difference.

That is what the CHPRD is all about - making a difference in the lives of Hispanics all across New Jersey. I hope this edition of *Matices* helps keep you up-to-date on New Jersey's Hispanic community and I encourage you to become more involved.

Sincerely,

Angie Armand Leon

Director, CHPRD

MATICES

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James E. McGreevey, *Governor*
Susan Bass Levin, *Commissioner*

NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS



Ileana Montes - New Leader for the Division on Women

Governor McGreevey recently named Ileana Montes, Esq. as acting director of DCA's Division on Women (DOW).

"We are fortunate to have someone with Ileana's experience and demonstrated knowledge of women's issues," Governor McGreevey said. "I am confident that she will work to further this administration's agenda in improving the quality of life for the citizens of this state."

"Ileana brings a unique understanding of what it means to be a woman in New Jersey to her new post as acting director of the Division on Women," Commissioner Levin added. "Through her hard work and commitment to excellence, she has made herself an indispensable asset to DCA and a valuable spokesperson for Governor McGreevey's women's agenda."



As Division on Women's acting director, Montes will oversee the creation of programs and services that empower women throughout New Jersey. Montes says she looks forward to providing a strong voice for women and promoting the advancement of women throughout New Jersey.

Montes serves on a number of professional organizations and committees, including Governor James E. McGreevey's Disparity Study Commission, the Gender Equity Advisory Committee, the Contract Compliance & Equal Employment Opportunity in Public Contracts Committee, the Girl Scout Council of Greater Essex and Hudson Counties, the Latino Leadership Alliance and the National Hispanic Bar Association.

State and Caucus Work Together to Restore Funding for Hispanic Programs



At DCA, Commissioner Levin and members of the Democratic Hispanic Caucus announce the restoration of more than \$2.1 million in state funding for Hispanic organizations and programs throughout New Jersey.

When Governor McGreevey was faced with a \$5 billion deficit in our state budget, he was forced to make a number of difficult decisions, including cuts that would affect the Hispanic community.

But on Thursday, May 29 at DCA, members of the Democratic Hispanic Caucus and DCA Commissioner Levin, along with the emphatic support of the governor, announced the restoration of more than \$2.1 million in state funding for Hispanic organizations and programs throughout New Jersey.

"It has always been my belief that the most important role that government can play in society is to provide a safety net for those citizens that are most in need," said Commissioner Levin. "That is what Governor McGreevey and Assemblyman Caraballo have accomplished."

Commissioner Levin recognized that any budget cuts would have been devastating to the Hispanic community and was committed to finding the necessary funds to support these vital programs.

"This truly is a wonderful day for the Hispanic community of New Jersey," said Assemblyman Wilfredo Caraballo (D-Essex), chairman of the Democratic Hispanic Caucus. "Governor McGreevey and Commissioner Levin understand the important role that these programs play in the lives of our Hispanic residents. Together, we have worked to find ways to restore every single cent proposed to be cut."

With help from the governor, Commissioner Levin, Assemblyman Carraballo and the Legislative Latino Caucus, full funding was restored to DCA's Hispanic programs and services, as well as the Department of Health's Office of Minority and Multicultural Health. The restoration of funds allows DCA to provide grants to 24 agencies and 67 programs whose funding is eligible for renewal. These agencies provide services to residents all over New Jersey. (Currently, DCA funds approximately 30 Hispanic organizations and 70 programs throughout New Jersey, and runs Hispanic Interns in Community Service Program and Latino Leaders Fellowship Institute, and the Certificate for Nonprofit Management Program.)

With the restoration of funds to the budget, these important programs will continue to assist and serve Hispanic families who otherwise would have nowhere to turn for assistance.

Did you know?

- ◆ Hispanics currently make up about 13 percent of New Jersey's total population
- ◆ In 1998, the unemployment rate for Hispanics was 6.8 percent, compared to 4 percent for Whites
- ◆ In 1999, the poverty rate for Hispanics in New Jersey was 17.9 percent
- ◆ By the year 2015, the Hispanic community will be the largest minority group in the state
- ◆ Over 159,000 New Jersey students' native language is Spanish

Statistics Show Need for Help

In a study presented by Dr. Albert Budet of Rutgers University at the Hispanic Education Summit, the following statistics proved the need to address issues facing Hispanic students' academic achievements.

- ◆ In 2001, 12 percent of Hispanic students graduated from high school, compared to 82 percent of White students and 64 percent of Black students
- ◆ In 2002, of Hispanics 25-years-old and over in New Jersey:
 - ❖ 36 percent had earned a high school diploma
 - ❖ 17.3 percent earned an associate's degree or completed some college
 - ❖ 9.5 percent earned a bachelor's degree
 - ❖ 2.8 percent earned a post-graduate or professional degree

*Read about
the First Education
Summit on page 5.*

In the Community

March of Dimes and the CHPRD Unite to Save Babies

*By Yvonne Ortiz-Haney, Community Director
March of Dimes Chapter of New Jersey*

For 64 years, the March of Dimes, a nonprofit organization, has been working to guarantee a healthy future for children. Its mission is to better the health of babies in order to prevent birth defects and infant mortality.

Thirteen percent of Hispanic women face premature labor and are at high risk of conceiving babies with cerebral and spinal defects. So, babies in the Hispanic community need special attention.

This year, the CHPRD partnered with the March of Dimes to introduce a new initiative that will assure better maternal and infant health services to the Hispanic community.

The Hispanic Initiative is designed to communicate the mission of the March of Dimes and the benefits it offers to the Hispanic population.

Another program offered to the community by the March of Dimes is *Comenzando Bien*. This initiative was started in 1996 and allows the March of Dimes to educate the Hispanic community about the importance of prenatal care. Through workshops offered in Spanish, participants receive instruction, support and educational material in a comfortable environment.

Other programs offered by the March of Dimes are the Resource Center and its Web page (www.nacersano.org). At either of these locations, you can find information in Spanish about pregnancy and prenatal care, free of charge.

For more information, visit www.nacersano.org

The CHPRD Joins Forces with the Metropolitan Adoption Resource Center to Recruit Latino Adoptive Parents

By Marcus Robinson, Adoption Recruitment Specialist

Who can be an adoptive parent? The State of New Jersey thinks you can.

Adoptive parents can come from any cultural or ethnic background. The CHPRD, Metropolitan Adoption Resource Center-Select and the N.J. Division of Youth and Family Services have joined together to encourage families with a Latino heritage to open their hearts to New Jersey children who need homes and families.

Today, there are approximately 8,500 children in the state's foster care system, most older than 5. Last year, only 1,189 children in foster care found families willing to adopt them, and we are looking to change that with the help of the Hispanic community.

There are two basic requirements for becoming an adoptive parent - candidates must be at least 18 years old and must be mature enough to handle the responsibility of raising a child. Otherwise, adoptive parents can be single, married or divorced. They can be male or female. They can be homeowners or renters. They do not have to be a U.S. citizen, but they must be in this country legally. Adoptive parents also can receive financial subsidies and Medicaid for the child's health insurance after an adoption is finalized.

The State of New Jersey and the CHPRD hope you will think about becoming an adoptive parent. For more information, call 1-800-99-ADOPT (1-800-992-3678) or visit www.njadopt.org

A home makes the difference...



ADOPT

1-800-99-ADOPT

First Hispanic Education Summit Held in Spring

By Soledad Heras, CHPRD Intern

Recognizing the need for Hispanic students to make further progress in academic achievement, the CHPRD, ASPIRA, the Hispanic Association for Higher Education, the Latino Leadership Alliance, the New Jersey Department of Education and the Hispanic Association of Directors co-sponsored the first Hispanic Education Summit last spring at Livingston College, Rutgers University, in New Brunswick.

The forum, "Forging our Families' Future: Raising Hispanic Educational Achievement," was aimed at strengthening the Hispanic community by promoting the success of its youth. The goal was to raise the educational accomplishments of the Latino population. This conference presented an opportunity for individuals to discuss the educational policies and programs that impact the Hispanic community.

The attendees that participated in workshops concentrated on achievement for students of preschool, elementary, secondary and higher education years to work toward this goal. The primary topics included Abbott reform, bilingual educa-

tion, barriers to higher education, special education and teacher preparation.

Parents, educators and community leaders alike showed their support by attending the conference. They interacted with one another and discussed ideas that could help school districts enhance the success of the increasing Latino student population.

Keynote speaker Dr. David T. Abalos, professor of religious studies and sociology at Seton Hall, and featured speaker Eunice Y. Couselo, director, Office of Specialized Populations at the New Jersey Department of Education, agreed on the obstacles facing Latino students and offered some solutions.

"One obstacle that we can all work on for Latino students is English language proficiency," stated Couselo. She went on to say the key is to be able to retain the students' mother tongue and to become proficient in English. Couselo and Abalos encouraged parents to become involved and to find a way to help their children in school. They also stressed how vital it is for parents to know their rights, their children's rights and what schools have

to offer. "We can no longer cry; we must scream" to obtain what we deserve, commented Abalos.

The morning session was highlighted by Governor McGreevey's address, which discussed the importance of health, reading level and parental involvement in order for Hispanic students to succeed in school. Governor McGreevey stated that "the State of New Jersey has a moral and ethical responsibility to make sure every child is properly vaccinated," so they can be enrolled in school. He also stressed the importance of early literacy and stated that, if he could, he would "throw every single television set out the window" because children need to read more. He remarked, "If a child is not age appropriate literate at third grade, there is only a nine percent chance that he will ever be." Governor McGreevey encouraged parents to "go back to your school district and get involved."

See Statistics on page 3

Questions & Answers

With Martha L. Bahamón



as the Poison Control Center, in Newark.

Martha Bahamón, a graduate of the Hispanic Interns in Community Service Program's class of 1991, recently started working at The Foundation of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey (UMNDJ) as director of Development for the New Jersey Poison Information and Education System (NJPIES), also known

What is your main role as director of Development for the Poison Control Center?

As director of Development, I am responsible for the fundraising and marketing efforts of NJPIES, which includes proposal and volunteer development, and donor solicitation, cultivation and stewardship. In addition to working with NJPIES, I also work with UMDNJ's Department of Preventive Medicine and

Community Health to assist with its grant development efforts.

What life experience(s) motivated you to pursue the career you've had until this point in your life?

While in high school, my career goal was to become a microbiologist. I truly enjoyed learning about science and how humanity can evolve as a result of scientific research. However, life took me on a different path. My family was one of the major sources of motivation and inspiration. My mother, who as a single head of household, raised four children while working 16-hour days, had an incredible impact in my life because she instilled in me that education was critical to a successful life and career. And my older brother, who attended Cook College at Rutgers University and is now a microbiologist, was my role model. He actually encouraged me to pursue my master's degree right after

Continued on page 8



Governor McGreevey visited PS#4 - a West New York elementary school - to congratulate students for receiving some of the highest scores in the state on their ESPA and GEPA tests. PS#4 and the West New York district recently implemented programs focused on early literacy, which the Governor commended as well.



(L to R) Director Angie Armand Leon, NJDOP Commissioner Ida Castro and Former Deputy Commissioner Abraham Antun pose for the camera alongside a group of graduates from the Class of 2002 of the Hispanic Interns in Community Service program.



The CHPRD participates in a tour of the U.S. Army's facilities in South Carolina.



2003 Hispanic Interns in Community Service Program interns Emanuele Mulé (second from right) and Pedro Khoury (second from left) with CHPRD Director Angie Armand Leon (center) and PSE&G representatives Ray Martelo (right) and Albert Branca (left). Mulé and Khoury are the 2003 PSE&G scholarship recipients.



El Gran Salsero, Luisito Figueroa Roig, sings for the crowd at the 2002 Excellence in Hispanic Leadership Award ceremony held at the governor's mansion.



DCA Commissioner Susan Bass Levin (right center) and NJDOP Commissioner Ida Castro (left center) present advocacy awards to (L to R) Keith Talbot, from Helping Hands Coalition; Zulima Farber; Ray Ocasio, executive director of La Casa de Don Pedro; and Hector Velasquez, chairman of the Board of La Casa de Don Pedro.

Photo Album



Director Angie Armand Leon (center) cuts the ribbon alongside (L to R) Councilman Smith and Rev. Jose Lopez at the March of Dimes' Walk America in Jersey City.



(L to R) Angie Armand Leon, JoAnn Dow-Breslin, Vanessa L. DeMicco, and Rodger Vander Brink at the graduation ceremony for the Class of 2002. Vanessa DeMicco was the winner of the 2002 PSE&G scholarship award.



(L to R) The Staff of the CHPRD, Fernando Rodriguez, Lorraine Nietos, Maria Miranda-Tolleris, Sandra Santiago and Shelly Matos, also participated in the 2003 Hispanic Interns in Community Service Program.

Alumni on the Move

Class of 93

- ◆ Jorge Cruz currently is the executive director of the Community Development Corporation at the Jersey City Episcopal in Jersey City.
- ◆ Omar Alejandro Vargas has made it to the nation's capital, working as a special assistant to the director of the U.S. Department of Justice, mainly working through the Violence Against Women Office in Washington, D.C.

Class of 94

- ◆ Nancy Rosado gave birth to a beautiful baby boy, Justin Morton, last June. Congratulations!

Class of 00

- ◆ Hermenegildo Santiago is currently working for the state government as the federal legislative liaison at the Office of Legislative Liaison in the Department of Human Services. He focuses on special projects and policy research concerning welfare and education, community colleges, children, youth and other federal legislative concerns. Santiago would love to hear from his comrades from the Latino Leaders Fellowship Institute, so feel free to e-mail him at hermen1_Santiago@hotmail.com.

Class of 01

- ◆ Tamahine Rezabala currently is working for the Middlesex County Vicinage as a bilingual investigator for the Criminal Intake Unit.
- ◆ Julio Garcia, who previously had been working with the Educational Excellence for Everyone, is now working as a Recruitment Coordinator at the Human Leukocyte Antigens (HLA) Bone Marrow Registry.
- ◆ Fernando Rodriguez recently graduated from Rutgers University and is currently working at Lawrence Neighborhood Service Center, a nonprofit organization.



(L to R) 2003 Interns Karen Torres, Lemuer Perez and Carmen Vanessa Reyes smile for the camera at the 2003 Kickoff Reception held on May 27th at the New Jersey Housing Mortgage & Finance Agency.

Questions & Answers...continued from page 5

college. I also had the support from my high school counselor, who always kept me in mind for scholarship or educational development opportunities. I was very active in extracurricular activities and got involved with ASPIRA, the YMWCA's youth government programs, the Upward Bound Program at Essex County College and the Talent Search Program at Seton Hall University, just to name a few. It was through these programs that I became interested in not only attending college, but also in public service by giving back to the community through volunteerism and civic participation.

What has been the most challenging part of your professional career?

The most challenging part of my professional career in the nonprofit sector has been fundraising. My first experience in fundraising was standing in front of 50 K-Mart employees at 7 a.m. telling them why they should give to the United Way. It was there I realized that as a fundraiser, you have to be passionate about the organization you represent and its benefits to the community. You really have to sell the idea of "giving" in a way that you can connect with people. This is sometimes very difficult to achieve, particularly when prospective donors are not knowledgeable about your organization's value. Fundraising is always a challenge, particularly now in light of an economic recession and the tragedy of 9/11. Less and less foundations and people are donating, so nonprofits always have to find new ways to strategically position and market themselves. They have to identify and work with key community stakeholders that are going to support their efforts, and ensure the quality customer service to its donors. For this reason, I challenged myself to enhance my educational credentials and pursue a second master's degree with a concentration in Public Policy and Nonprofit Management at the Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University.

What role(s) do you think the Latino community may have in public policy formation in the near future?

The Latino community has strength in numbers. Latinos already are active participants in public policy formulation throughout the state. We see examples of this from statewide organizations that influence public policy making in the state, such as the Hispanic Directors Association, the New Jersey Hispanic Bar Association, Latinas United for Political Empowerment (LUPE), and the New Jersey Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Based on what has already been accomplished, and what is currently taking place as it pertains to our civic and political participation, Latinos are - and will continue to be - a voice at the public policy table.

How do you go about addressing the issues that affect Latinos on a day-to-day basis?

I currently serve on a number of committees such as the CHPRD's Advisory Committee, where we review proposals submitted by Latino nonprofit, community-based organizations and recommend them to receive funding from the state. This process is critical to ensure that Latino community-based organizations receive financial support and resources to continue their operations and assist Latinos seeking much-needed social services. I also represent and advocate for the Latino community in several other organizations, including the New Jersey United for Higher School Standards Founding Committee, the March of Dimes Statewide Hispanic Advisory Committee, LUPE, the Newark Workforce Investment Board, and the Newark Festival of People committee. I serve as president of the Colombian American Alliance, Inc., a civic association in the City of Elizabeth whose mission is to promote the well being of Colombian-Americans and the Hispanic community by providing educational, social and cultural programs. The Alliance also advocates for the rights of new immigrants throughout the state and nationally.

What are the goals you hope to accomplish in your position and in your field?

I certainly enjoy the career that I have embarked upon. It is extremely rewarding to provide guidance and capacity building support to nonprofit organizations. Knowing that, though, I had the opportunity to teach a class on grantsmanship as an adjunct professor at Seton Hall University's Center for Public Service in South Orange, which I enjoyed very much. I honestly can say that teaching is certainly a vocation worth contemplating. It gives you an opportunity not only to share your knowledge and experience, but it also helps hone your public speaking skills and keeps you abreast of what is current in your field of work.

As a final thought, what is your message to a Latina(o) youth pursuing a career in Public Service?

My advice is to plan your life as if you were planning a road trip. Map out your academic and personal accomplishments, as well as your future goals. Identify what is missing from that plan, fill in the blanks and work on making it a reality. A word of advice: if you have not volunteered for a specific organization or cause - do it right now! Time invested in volunteering or by getting involved in civic activities is an excellent way to realize if public service is your calling. It also is an excellent opportunity to network and find the right mentors. Always remember: your professional success will depend on you having the strength to say you don't know, the courage to ask for help, the dignity to accept advice and the power to use the Hispanic culture as a source of inspiration to accomplish your goals.



Governor McGreevey participates in the festivities at the National Puerto Rican Day Parade in New York City in June. The annual event celebrates the Puerto Rican people and their culture.

Council...continued from page 1

dominantly Spanish-speaking population, with few or no Spanish-speaking healthcare providers, a limited English proficiency becomes a barrier almost impossible to overcome. Therefore, the absence of Spanish translators makes the barrier an impenetrable wall.

Another barrier for the Latino community exists in education. It is well known that Latino children often fall behind in school because of a lack of early childhood education. This occurs partly because pre-school programs and facilities are scarcely available in areas with a substantial number of Hispanic residents.

According to ASPIRA, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to empower the Latino community by developing its youth, in 1998, only 20 percent of Latino 3-year-olds were enrolled in some form of early childhood education program. The ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education reported, "Latinos under age 5 are less likely to be enrolled in early childhood education programs than other groups: 20 percent, as compared with 44 percent of African Americans and 42 percent of Whites." These statistics are true for both suburban and urban areas.

Another main concern of the Hispanic Advisory Council is the population of undocumented workers in New Jersey, which Chairwoman Castro says is the most vulnerable Hispanic population. According to the Federation for American Immigration Reform, the population of illegal immigrants residing in New Jersey now totals about 300,000 and is continuously increasing. Clearly, the immigrant population comprises a significant component of our society and must not be ignored.

Undocumented aliens receive little benefits from the government. In 1996, Congress passed the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act, which deemed undocumented persons virtually ineligible to benefit from most public assistance programs including Social Security, food stamps, welfare and higher education assistance. Faced with poverty, a new environment, the inability to speak the native language and a lack of assistance from the government, illegal immigrants soon become undocumented workers. In time, they are often exploited, underpaid and cheated by employers who are rarely prosecuted.

Chairwoman Castro plans to provide Governor McGreevey with a road map he can follow and one which New Jersey's Hispanic community can be proud of. She then hopes to pursue the recommendations set forth in the report and help the Governor execute them.

When asked what her message is to New Jersey's Latino population, Chairwoman Castro replied with a smile, "I would not be as presumptuous as to say it is a message. As a working mother, I had to fight to overcome the barriers of discrimination. To the youth: If you envision a better future, take every step to reach that dream. If you do, you will surprise yourself and help your community."

Meet the Council

In addition to Chairwoman Castro, other Council members include:

- **Guillermo Jose Beytagh-Maldonado** is the executive director of the Puerto Rican Action Board and founder of the Latino Leadership Alliance of New Jersey.
- **Luis A. Lopez** is the president of the Bilingual District Parent Advisory Council and member of the Camden Community Farmer's Market Coalition, the Camden County Anti-Tobacco Coalition and the Public Notaries of New Jersey.
- **Casto Maldonado** is the president and CEO of FOCUS Hispanic Center for Community Development and founder of Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, the first and only monthly publication addressing concerns of Hispanics in higher education throughout the nation.
- **Moises Perez** is the executive director and co-founder of Alianza Dominica, a community-based organization that provides comprehensive services for children and families. Perez also is co-founder of the Northern Manhattan Collaborates, founding member of the Hispanic Federation of New York City and co-vice chair of The Agenda for Children Tomorrow.
- **Rev. Joshua Rodriguez** is the senior pastor at the Cityline Church, hosts a weekly radio program on Noticias 1380 AM and volunteers for the Red Cross.
- **Esther Salas** is a member of the Hispanic Bar Association of New Jersey, the Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers of New Jersey, the New Jersey State Bar Association, the Supreme Court Committee on Minority Concerns and a trustee of the Hispanic Bar Foundation of New Jersey.
- **Noemi Velazquez** is co-founder of the New Jersey Hispanic Research and Information Center and member of the National Association of the Bilingual Educator and the National Education Association.
- **Olga Jimenez** is an associate professor of history and director of the Puerto Rican Studies Program at Rutgers University.

A Legacy Still Lives On

A Tribute to Dr. Antonia Pantoja

By Carlos Hendricks, Jr., CHPRD Intern

Last spring, a significant part of the Latino community was lost. Dr. Antonia Pantoja, one of the most influential humanitarians, activists, leaders and educators in Latino history, passed away.

Her dedication to the development of the people in her native Puerto Rico - and of all Latino backgrounds - is legendary. For her noble efforts, President Bill Clinton awarded her the highest honor that an American citizen can receive - the Presidential Medal of Freedom. That acknowledgement speaks for itself, however the honors and awards Dr. Pantoja received throughout her career were not her motivation. Through the years, she struggled and strived to help Latinos become more educated, respected and recognized in today's society.

Dr. Pantoja's education demonstrates her drive to continually work hard and reach goals. She received a Normal School Degree from the University of Puerto Rico, a Bachelor of Arts from Hunter College-City University of New York (CUNY), a master's degree in Social Work from the Union Graduate School, and her doctorate from Columbia University. Courage, perseverance and dedication are just a few words that describe Dr. Antonia Pantoja. Her efforts to improve the Latino community are well established today through the foundation of the Universidad Boricua and the Puerto Rican Research and Resource Center, and in her work with organizations such as ASPIRA, PRODUCIR, Puerto Rican Forum and Puerto Rican Association for Community Affairs (PRACA). These organizations, to which she so passionately contributed, serve as a foundation for the Latino community and offer

Latinos the opportunity to make significant contributions to society.

Before her passing, Dr. Pantoja left something behind that she intended and hoped Latinos would appreciate and learn from - her memoir. *Memoir of a Visionary: Antonia Pantoja* was released, ironically, the week following her death.

The memoir depicts the self-motivated journey Pantoja followed to establish herself in society. It also discusses the hardships, struggles and revolutionary accomplishments she experienced during her evolution from dedicated and hard-working student, to influential humanitarian and community activist, to being recognized by President Clinton. This memoir is not an ordinary biography, but a message to the Latino community demonstrating that Latinos can make it in society regardless of the obstacles and doubts they face.

Dr. Pantoja had a vision of a Latino community that is empowered through education and community involvement, a vision that has become part of the mission of the CHPRD and that drives our programs and services.



Dr. Antonia Pantoja

The following are programs funded by ASPIRA, one of the organizations founded by Dr. Pantoja, and which the CHPRD funds.

The ASPIRA Youth Leadership Development Program provides approximately 90 students each year with the opportunity to study leadership and work with local leaders in community service internships. Selected students also spend the summer in Washington, D.C. as interns.

For 25 years, the ASPIRA National Health Careers Program has provided 1,000 high school and college students per year with the experience, motivation and academic support they need to become health professionals.

The ASPIRA Math and Science Academy (MAS) and CASA MAS improves the math and science skills of Latino middle school students with hands-on activities, mentors, field trips and academic assistance. The initiative operates both as an after school enrichment program and as part of an alternative school curriculum.

The ASPIRA - Youth Ventures Entrepreneurship Program is a partnering of Youth Venture and the ASPIRA

Association. The program propels youth development beyond the individual strengths of youth programs, and this partnership gives Latino youth the opportunity to develop and employ entrepreneurial skills.

The Teachers, Organizations and Parents for Students (TOPS) Partnership Project teams teachers and parents to help individual students achieve their personal and academic goals. TOPS integrates parent involvement activities with child-centered counseling and mentoring.

The ASPIRA Parents for Educational Excellence (APEX) Initiative trains parents to become informed advocates, working together to improve education in their communities.

The Mobilization for Equity provides information to community members around the country on public policy issues related to the equity of educational services. It helps the Latino community understand students' rights and promotes effective advocacy strategies for change.

Potpourri

Page



Bistec Relleno en Leche de Coco

Ingredients:

- 2lb de bistec
- 2 dientes de ajo
- 1 cucharada de adobo
- ¼ cucharadita de sal
- 2 plátanos maduros
- 1 lata de leche de coco
- cucharada de aceite de oliva

Preparación:

Mezcle el ajo, sal, adobo, y perejil con la carne, la cual será picada finamente para que pueda ser enrollada. Cosa el plátano maduro hasta que este bien cocido. Luego májelo hasta que quede una masa suave. Ponga el bistec en una superficie plana para trabajar y ponga una masa de plátano en cada bistec y enróllelo. Pinchelo con palillos de dientes para evitar que la masa se salga. En un sartén precalentado a fuego bajo, agregue el aceite con la leche de coco y coloque en el mismo los bistec. Déjelo cocinar por unos 30 minutos a fuego moderado hasta que la leche de coco este espesa y los bistec cocinados completamente o al gusto de la persona. Sirvalos con arroz blanco.

Latino History Corner



Roberto Clemente (1934-1972) - Professional Baseball Player

Roberto Clemente was born in Carolina, Puerto Rico, on August 18, 1934. He was a baseball player with the Pittsburgh Pirates from 1955-1972 and during his tenure there, achieved many notable accomplishments. He compiled a lifetime batting average of .317, hit 240 home runs and was considered baseball's premier defensive outfielder. Clemente won four National League batting titles (1961, 1964, 1965, 1966), was the league's Most Valuable Player in 1966 and was selected to the All-Star team 12 times. He also won 12 Gold Glove awards as the National

League's premier right fielder. He obtained his 3,000th hit in the last game of the 1972 season. His life was tragically cut short when an airplane loaded with supplies for earthquake victims in Managua, Nicaragua, crashed off the Puerto Rican coast. He was specially elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame in 1973. This year commemorates the 30th anniversary of his tragic death. (photo source: <http://www.robortoclemente21.com/Biography/biography.html>)



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen - Congresswoman

The first Hispanic woman elected to the United States Congress, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen was born in Havana, Cuba, on July 15, 1952. When she was just 7 years old, she came to the United States with her family to flee communist aggression in Cuba. The congresswoman has an astute educational career, earning her Associate of Arts from Miami-Dade Community College and both her bachelor's and master's degrees from Florida International University. She also has been bestowed an honorary doctor of Pedagogy degree from Nova Southeastern University and

currently is working on her doctoral dissertation in Higher Education from the University of Miami. Ros-Lehtinen began her career as an educator and founded a private elementary school in South Florida before moving onto her political career. Since 1982, the congresswoman has demonstrated leadership and commitment education and human rights. She is the first Hispanic woman to chair a subcommittee - the Subcommittee on International Operations and Human Rights. This year marks the 21st year since her historical election into the United States Congress. (photo source: <http://www.house.gov/ros-lehtinen/>)

Paraíso Eterno

Por Maritza I. Raimundi, Clase del 1996

Encuentro la inspiración entre tus palmas
Reinas que bailan al ritmo de una bachata
Típica cultura dominicana...

Encuentro la inspiración entre tus montes
Guardianes fieles de tu historia
En manos del ferviente trabajador...

Encuentro la inspiración entre tu gente
Símbolos de tierno existir
Pacientes mensajeros de tu cultura
Eternos hijos de tu libertad ardiente...

Encuentro las inspiración entre tus playas
Olas que chocan contra mi pecho herido
Al pensar en la distancia
Que separa mi cuerpo de tus nidos...

Encuentro la inspiración entre tu cielo
Nubes blancas que cubren mi anhelo
De querer tener alas para volar sobre tu suelo...

Encuentro la inspiración entre noches estrelladas
Que dibujan en el firmamento la nostalgia de tus besos
Bajo la luna niña que vigila tus sueños...

Encuentro la inspiración en las poesia de tus valles
En los caminos que me llevan de Santiago a la Capital
De Sosua a Boca Chica
De Puerto Plata a la Romana
De un punto de la isla al otro lado

Encuentro la poesia en el latir de tu tierra
Donde nacen los frutos que alimentan el hambre
de mi espíritu
Que sostienen la esperanza de una isla caribeña
Hermana vecina de mi patria Puertorriqueña...

Encuentro la inspiración en lo familiar de tu aire
En el cantar de tu gente
En la belleza de tu inocencia
En el verdor de tus llanos
En el rojo ardiente de tus flamboyanes
En el sol que cubre mis caderas
Al deslizarse el mar por mi espalda...

Encuentro la inspiración en el amor que satura mi pecho
En el sendito de locura que me roba el aliento.
Encuentro la poesia en la inspiración de tus versos
Escritos en el pasar del tiempo...
Encuentro la inspiración en Quisqueya la bella...
Un paraíso eterno!

Abril 1998



Further demonstrating his commitment to the Latino community, Governor James E. McGreevey, joined by Assembly Speaker Albio Sires, recently announced the revitalization of the Free Cuba Task Force, which was created in 1994. The Task Force will conduct a study to determine the likely social, economic and cultural consequences that would result from the liberation of Cuba. In particular, it will plan a strategy that will enable the State of New Jersey and the people of Cuba to take full advantage of democratic reform in Cuba.

In the next edition of Matices...

DCA Commissioner Susan Bass Levin recently awarded the 2003 Excellence in Hispanic Leadership Awards to ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey, Department of Personnel Commissioner Ida Castro, and Assemblyman Wilfredo Caraballo. Read more about this year's awards and honorees in the next edition of Matices.

Susan Bass Levin
NJ Department
of Community Affairs



James E. McGreevey
Governor
State of New Jersey



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